

Terms of Reference

for

Technical Consultancy on RMG Supply Chain Factory Productivity and Standard Improvement Through Skill Development

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 ABOUT SWISSCONTACT

Swisscontact, Swiss Foundation for Technical Cooperation, is headquartered in Zurich and was founded in 1959 by leading figures from the Swiss private sector and Swiss universities. It is exclusively involved in international cooperation and, since 1961, has carried out its own and mandated projects. A part of the organisation, Swisscontact Bangladesh, is registered as an international non-governmental organisation (INGO) under the NGO Affairs Bureau, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, carrying out diverse projects across sectors such as Ready-Made Garments (RMG), Agriculture, Health, Water and Sanitation, Light Engineering, and Financial Inclusion.

1.2 ABOUT PROGRESS

The Promoting Green Growth in the Ready-Made Garments Sector through Skills (PROGRESS) is funded by the Embassy of Sweden and the Embassy of Switzerland in Bangladesh and implemented by Swisscontact. The project supports the RMG sector to advance in the green transition by building its resilience and competitiveness.

The PROGRESS project drives sustainable growth in the RMG sector through a market-driven approach. The project has two components.

- **The first component, Skills & Productivity**, aims to improve the technical skills and productivity of RMG workers. Under this component, with support from the project, the Consultancy Service Providers (CSPs)¹ develop the skills of the workers in areas like low performance, zero defect, women leadership, etc., which make them more competent and productive. Besides, the project supports the factories in developing an in-house training system to ensure the sustainability of these initiatives.
- **The second component, Environment & Social Compliance**, supports factories in their journey of decarbonisation. The CSPs, with support from the project, assess the factories' status of carbon emissions at baseline and help them develop tailored pathways to reach net-zero emissions, while also promoting sustainability reporting. PROGRESS facilitates partnership between CSPs and factories to deliver commercially viable solutions.

¹ Consultancy service providers (CSPs) are reputed national/international commercial consultancy firms that have certain expertise to implement interventions in partner factories for PROGRESS. They have legal, technical and financially binding contracts with the project. Beyond project, they are expected to provide similar services to the factories in exchange of service fees.

The project's ultimate objective is to improve the job competitiveness of low-skilled industrial workers (including women), especially in the RMG supply chain.²

1.3 BACKGROUND FOR THE ASSIGNMENT

Bangladesh's RMG supply chain faces rising pressure on price and compliance. LDC graduation in November 2026 starts the transition out of the EU's Everything But Arms duty-free preferences, which end in 2029, while EU buyers face new due diligence and reporting obligations under the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) and the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD). Higher productivity, better quality, shorter lead times and verifiable workforce and environmental standards are therefore central to holding margins and orders.

Large factories have gradually aligned with global efficiency and sustainability benchmarks. Many small and medium-sized (Tier 2 and Tier 3) supply-chain factories still struggle with outdated processes, limited workforce capacity and low awareness of green and inclusive practices. Gaps persist at technical and managerial levels, especially in quality assurance, resource efficiency and gender-inclusive workforce development. PROGRESS therefore seeks CSPs to design and deliver tailored, co-financed skills interventions that build factory competitiveness.

In response, Swisscontact's PROGRESS project aims to design tailored interventions, utilising a co-finance model, that build factory competitiveness through skill development and drive sustainable growth across the Ready-Made Garments (RMG) supply chain.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The objective of this assignment is to design and implement targeted, co-financed interventions that integrate technical and green skills across RMG supply-chain factories. By co-designing practical solutions with factory management, the assignment will focus on enhancing worker productivity, product quality, and resource efficiency while promoting sustainable production practices. Additionally, it aims to foster inclusive workforce development by advancing women into leadership roles and strengthening workforce capabilities through practical, industry-aligned training methodologies.

To ensure long-term impact, the assignment will institutionalise in-house training capacity within partner factories and establish a commercially viable Consultancy Service Provider (CSP) model. Ultimately, the project seeks to develop a scalable and replicable framework that aligns with broader goals of industrial competitiveness, environmental sustainability, and inclusive economic growth in Bangladesh's RMG sector.

3. SCOPE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The scope of the assignment entails the following:

- The consultancy firm(s) will design and implement tailored productivity and skill development interventions in RMG supply chain factories, focusing on improving efficiency and integrating green skills relevant to the processes of the factories.

² The RMG supply chain encompasses all actors involved in the process of garments manufacturing including but not limited to textile processors, accessory and trims manufacturers, garment factories, recycle or waste processors.

- Consultancy firms will be responsible for onboarding factories and co-designing interventions based on factory-specific needs, ensuring both short-term results and long-term sustainability beyond the project duration.
- Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) must be integrated into all interventions. The target aims to achieve at least 50% participation in management training and 60% in worker training, along with promoting women's leadership and fostering a gender-inclusive work environment.
- Consultancy firms may design targeted, gender-specific interventions to address unique workplace barriers, which must include HR policy strengthening components to institutionalise inclusive practices and promote women's advancement.
- The project will engage factories across selected geographic areas (See below Geographical Locations). Where direct engagement is challenging, firms are encouraged to collaborate with brands to leverage their influence over supply chain partners.
- A cost-sharing approach will be followed, with factories expected to contribute to consultant fees and continue training through an industry-based training (IBT) model. Consultants must secure factory buy-in for this arrangement.
- Proposals must include a detailed intervention and execution plan, GESI and sustainability integration strategies, and a realistic budget for each proposed intervention.
- Consultancy firms must showcase a clear, tangible Return on Investment (ROI) for each proposed intervention, demonstrating measurable financial, operational, or resource efficiency gains to justify factory co-financing and secure long-term buy-in.

The table below elaborates on some key deliverables of the assignment.

Table 1: Summary table

Guidelines
Submit a proposal detailing the number of factories to be engaged across the four project locations.
Submit a comprehensive plan outlining interventions, GESI targets, implementation strategies, factory engagement, timeline, and sustainability plan. It is recommended to include the approximate amount of the factory's in-cash contribution towards the proposed interventions.
Submit an analysis plan including the key performance indicators (KPIs) to assess the success of each of the proposed interventions. The analysis must include productivity gains, factory profit margins, return on investment (ROI), worker and staff retention, promotion rates, and financial gains for the factories. Additionally, the consultant is required to provide relevant data and analysis to support the project's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) team in demonstrating the impact of the PROGRESS intervention at both factory and worker levels.
Submit a financial proposal outlining the costs associated with each factory (Supply chain-wise) for the entire assignment, including onboarding to the final report submission to the PROGRESS team (in BDT).
Pre-bid Meeting: Interested bidders are encouraged to attend an online pre-bid meeting to be held on 27 October 2026, 11.00 AM to 12.00 PM (Those who are interested in joining the pre-bid meeting are

requested to inform us by email at **bd.progress@swisscontact.org** by 25 October 2026. For the pre-bid meeting, please mention in the subject line “Pre-bid meeting PROGRESS 2026”.

4. RMG SUPPLY CHAIN SCOPE

The RMG supply chain involves a wide range of interconnected sectors, each playing a role in the production, processing, and distribution of garments. Interventions may target any of the following areas depending on technical expertise, relevance, and impact potential. The Relevant RMG Supply Chain sectors are (not limited to):

- Textile Industry
- Yarn Production
- Spinning Mills
- Accessories & Trims Manufacturing
- Packaging Suppliers
- Garment Factories
- Machinery, Technology & Spare Parts
- Testing & Certification Services
- Recycling & Waste Processing
- Export & Logistics
- Marketing & Distribution, etc.

(Factories that have received direct skills development support or interventions from Swisscontact within the last four years are not eligible for participation under this assignment.)

5. GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

The project will cover four key RMG hubs in Bangladesh: Dhaka, Gazipur, Narayanganj, and Chattogram. Factories located within Export Processing Zones (EPZs) are excluded from the scope of this intervention.

6. DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The duration of the contract will be from the day of signing to June 2027, as agreed between both parties.

7. DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR SUBMISSION

All bidding consultant/ consultancy firms are required to submit the following:

- a) A technical proposal elaborating the understanding of the assignment, proposed methodology, assessment tools, timeline (activity plan), key staff profiles, roles, and individual time to be spent on the assignment. Please refer table 1 above for the more details.
- b) A separate financial proposal setting out a detailed budget for the assignment (in BDT).
- c) A summary of relevant services provided during the last 3 years.
- d) CVs of the key personnel who will be involved in the assignment.
- e) A list of the existing clientele of the organisation.

- f) It is mandatory for the bidding organisations to submit documentary evidence demonstrating their legal, taxation, and financial status. This includes:
- i. A certificate of incorporation (for individual companies, a trade license), Registration-related documents (trade license, registration with any government entities/NGO bureau registration).
 - ii. An organisational organogram of key personnel, inclusive of the names of such personnel.
 - iii. Tax Identification Number (TIN).
 - iv. Business Identification Number (BIN).
 - v. Latest PSR (Proof of Submission of the Return)
 - vi. A signed statement testifying that all information contained within the proposal is correct and true.

8. SELECTION CRITERIA

The following selection criteria are generally applicable for the evaluation of the potential consultant/firm for this assignment:

Table 2: Selection Criteria

SL	Selection criteria	Points
1.	Technical Proposal	70
1.1	<i>Understanding of the assignment</i>	10
1.2	<i>Quality of the proposed methodology and tools</i>	10
1.3	<i>Relevant experience in the RMG sector in Bangladesh</i>	10
1.4	<i>Quality of the human resource dedicated to the assignment</i>	5
1.5	<i>A gender-inclusive team composition</i>	5
1.6	<i>GESI strategy for the intervention</i>	10
1.7	<i>Sustainability and commercial model</i>	10
1.8	<i>Results, KPIs, ROI and M&E plan</i>	10
2.	Financial Proposal	20
3.	Presentation (Only with initially shortlisted applicants)	10

(To implement this assignment, Swisscontact may engage one or more consultancy firm(s) to deliver the required interventions based on their specific expertise, proposed approaches, and capacities.)

9. SUBMISSION DETAILS

Interested applicants must submit their proposals via email to ***bd.progress@swisscontact.org*** by 01 November 2026. The email subject line must state: **“Technical Consultancy on RMG Supply Chain Factory Skills and Productivity”**. In addition to the email submission, a hard copy of the technical and financial proposal separately should be delivered to the following address by the same deadline:

Swisscontact Bangladesh Office
House 28, Road 43, Gulshan-2, Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh

Late or incomplete submissions will not be considered. Swisscontact reserves the right to accept or reject any application, in part or in full, or cancel the entire procurement process without assigning any reason whatsoever. Submission of an application does not guarantee the award of the contract.

10. REPORTING

The selected applicant(s) will collaborate closely with the PROGRESS team, providing regular updates and reporting directly to the PROGRESS Team Leader. Additionally, the selected applicant(s) are expected to maintain seamless communication with team members to ensure timely execution of project tasks and adherence to strategic objectives.